



BEAUTY STANDARDS: IDEOLOGIES AND STEREOTYPES

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Abstract

Beauty Standards have been a topic of academic interest for many years, as it sheds light on the societal and cultural norms surrounding physical appearance. The concept of beauty is subjective and varies across different cultures and periods. This article demonstrates that beauty standards can be a form of discrimination, particularly towards marginalized groups such as people of color, those with disabilities, and individuals who do not conform to traditional gender norms. The article highlights the importance of promoting diverse and inclusive beauty standards that celebrate all forms of beauty. In conclusion, the article tries to conclude that we do to make ourselves more beautiful.

Keywords: Beauty stereotype, mental health, psychological disorder, body dysmorphia

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Introduction:

Beauty standards have always been extremely prevalent throughout human history, and today they strongly influence everyday communication, the media, and the business world. They define what "beautiful", body shape is, facial proportions, height, and weight. From evolution to racism to social media, there are so many influences on our beauty standards. In the contemporary times beauty standards are set by human nature to strive for the conformity to their socio-cultural and political systems. This also explains why people tend to "deceive" others by using clothes, makeup, and other methods that keep exerting pressure towards seeing attractiveness a normative feature in the society. However, the developmental influences such as cultural or social norms is not discussed in the literature. Therefore, this article focuses exclusively on the development perspective of beauty standards in society. Over the time, concept of beauty became very selective, and thus it has entered business domains. That has expended further with the growth in many a company's advertising and selling cosmetics products, by advertising them as effective solution to beautification. Made beauty products feminist and empowering, which was another way for them to reach new consumers and sell more products. The cosmetics industry is highly competitive, with many established players and new entrants vying for market share. Some of the largest cosmetic companies in the world include L'Oréal, Estée Lauder, Procter & Gamble, Shiseido, Unilever, and Johnson & Johnson. These companies have a significant global presence and invest heavily in research and development, marketing, and advertising to promote their products. The products are still meant to, "brighten" or "anti-aging" even if the models are darker or older. In conclusion, the framework of cultural capital allows us to see how social actors use their physical appearance as symbolic power in the social environment. This shows that women still must use beauty to gain capital, which is why beauty works in this system. This urge to place an almost moral value on beauty is what motivates women to participate in beauty culture, even though they know the industry is not necessarily honest or empowering. By convincing other races that they were less attractive than whites, they were able to gain social capital among their members. White supremacy could creep into the eternal concept of beauty. From skin-lightening creams to diet pills and corsets, so many different beauty standards have become products. This led to beauty advertisements continuing to push beauty standards to convince buyers that the product would improve their quality of life. Social media

has come into this game. What is profitable on social media is determined by capitalism - the main purpose of social media is to sell products and boost the economy. So, influencers started using plastic surgery and Photoshop to make themselves and their bodies more profitable. The meaning of beauty is no longer an interpersonal concept that can be used to find others to breed with. It snowballed into a tool of power - a way for one group of people to control another and maintain the exclusivity of a standard of beauty. As much as a beauty product is promoted as a way for the individual to gain power over their self-image, the truth is that beauty companies rely on the insecurity of the consumer base. If everyone was truly happy with their appearance, there would be no reason for them to buy makeup, diet products, hair products, and more. There is no way for an individual to gain freedom through the beauty industry, especially for women, because their beauty is usually traded and used against them in a form of oppression. Beauty standards are a very complex social process that continues through multiple forms of social status. However, this beauty standard can also be tied to social status and class, as those with lighter skin tones are often associated with higher social status and wealth. As a result, this person may feel pressure to conform to this beauty standard to increase their social standing, despite the harmful effects of skin-lightening products on their health. In this way, beauty standards can be a complex social process that continues through multiple forms of social status, impacting people's sense of self-worth and their decisions about how they present themselves to the world. Although scientists may believe that evolution has caused beauty standards, many other aspects of society have influenced the ideal appearance. Beauty lies in the uncanny valley between scientific fact and social construct, making the concept extremely difficult, if not impossible, to eradicate. Such variations in beauty ideals often reflect the roles expected of women and men in each society. For example, in a context where women are valued primarily for their fertility - their ability to bear and care for children - plump women with wide hips and ample breasts are often considered the most beautiful. We all know that beauty is in the eye of the beholder; however, this adage takes on a more literal meaning when we consider the diversity of opinions on what makes a person "beautiful" around the world. Physical characteristics are emphasized and cared for differently across cultures, and people (especially women) experience different pressures to meet standards—and often different constraints on self-representation—depending on where they are in

the world. In the contemporary times, beauty standards in India have turned towards Western ideals, pressuring women to lighten their skin and lose weight to compete with Western women. A feminine beauty ideal is a specific set of beauty standards associated with characteristics that are instilled in women throughout their lives and from a young age to increase their perceived physical attractiveness. This is a phenomenon that many women around the world experience, although the characteristics change over time and vary from country to country and culture to culture. Female ideals of beauty are mainly based on heteronormative beliefs, but they strongly influence women of all sexual orientations. The ideal characteristics of a woman's beauty include, for example, a woman's body shape, facial features, skin tones, height, clothing style, hairstyle, and body weight. The pressure to conform to an idealized version of beauty portrayed by the media and fashion industry can lead to serious psychological consequences, such as eating disorders and depression. It is important to recognize and challenge these unrealistic beauty standards and promote diverse and inclusive representations of beauty. By doing so, we can create a more positive and accepting environment where everyone can feel confident and beautiful, regardless of their physical appearance.

The Commercialization of Beauty

Beauty has been a central aspect of human culture for centuries. People have always sought to enhance their appearance in various ways, whether through fashion, makeup, skincare, or other means. However, in recent decades, the beauty industry has experienced explosive growth and commercialization, transforming the way people think about and engage with beauty. This has led to the creation and perpetuation of beauty standards, with significant economic and ethical implications.

The beauty industry and market have influenced the creation and perpetuation of beauty standards in several ways. First, they have played a significant role in defining and promoting certain physical features and beauty ideals. Advertisements, fashion shows, and beauty pageants are just some examples of how the industry has used media to promote certain images and beauty standards. These standards often prioritize particularly physical features, such as fair skin, straight hair, and a slim figure, while devaluing others.

Second, the beauty industry has also influenced the way people perceive and define beauty. As people

are bombarded with images of beauty in the media, they may begin to internalize these standards and believe that they represent the only acceptable form of beauty. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem for those who do not fit these standards.

Third, the beauty industry has created a sense of urgency and consumerism around beauty. Companies constantly release new products and promote the idea that people need to keep up with the latest trends to be considered beautiful. This can lead to a cycle of consumption, where people are constantly buying new products in pursuit of an unattainable ideal.

The economic implications of the beauty industry's influence on beauty standards are significant. The industry is worth billions of dollars, with companies constantly looking for new ways to profit from people's desire to be beautiful. This has led to the creation of a vast array of products, ranging from cosmetics and skincare to hair care and weight loss supplements. The industry has also created jobs, from makeup artists and hairdressers to fashion designers and models. However, the economic benefits of the beauty industry are not distributed equally. The industry often targets affluent consumers, leaving lower-income individuals with limited access to beauty products and services. This can exacerbate existing inequalities and perpetuate societal beauty standards that prioritize wealth and privilege.

The ethical implications of the beauty industry's influence on beauty standards are also significant. The industry often perpetuates harmful beauty standards that prioritize certain physical features and perpetuate discrimination based on factors such as race, gender, and age. For example, the industry has a history of promoting light skin as more beautiful, perpetuating colorism and racism. It also frequently promotes youthfulness as the epitome of beauty, leading to discrimination against older individuals.

Moreover, the industry often uses unethical marketing tactics to promote its products. This includes using misleading or exaggerated claims about the effectiveness of products, using unattainable images to sell products, and promoting unhealthy beauty standards such as extreme thinness. These practices can lead to harm to consumers, as well as to the environment and society as a whole.

To sum up, the commercialization of beauty has had a significant impact on the creation and perpetuation of beauty standards. The beauty

industry has influenced the way people perceive and define beauty, creating a sense of urgency and consumerism around beauty. However, this has also led to significant economic and ethical implications, including exacerbating existing inequalities, and perpetuating harmful beauty standards. As consumers, it is important to be critical of the beauty industry and its impact on society and to prioritize ethical and sustainable beauty practices.

Literature review:

Beauty standards and the associated ideologies and stereotypes have been a persistent topic of discussion in society for many years. The topic of "beauty standards; ideologies and stereotypes" refers to the societal pressures and expectations surrounding physical appearance, and the associated beliefs and assumptions about beauty that underpin these pressures. Beauty standards refer to the specific physical attributes or traits that are considered desirable in each culture or society, such as clear skin, a slim figure, or symmetrical facial features. Ideologies are the underlying beliefs and values that shape our perceptions of beauty, while stereotypes are oversimplified and often harmful assumptions about people based on their appearance.

The concept of beauty standards has been widely studied in psychology, sociology, and other fields, and research has shown that these standards can have significant impacts on individuals' self-esteem, body image, and overall mental health. These impacts can be particularly pronounced for women, who often face more intense pressure to conform to beauty standards than men. Furthermore, beauty standards are not universal but vary across cultures and periods and can intersect with other social identities such as race, gender, and class. (Kolbe, L. 2018).

Despite increased awareness of the negative impacts of beauty standards and stereotypes, these pressures continue to be pervasive in our society. As such, it is important to continue to explore and understand the complexities of beauty standards, ideologies, and stereotypes, to promote greater acceptance and diversity in our understanding of physical beauty, and to counteract the harmful effects of these pressures on individuals and society. According to a survey conducted by Dove, only 4% of women globally consider themselves to be beautiful, and 72% of girls feel pressure to be beautiful (Dove, 2016. Dove global beauty and confidence report).

This pressure to conform to narrow beauty standards has been linked to negative outcomes such as body dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, and disordered eating. Research has also shown that beauty standards are not universal but vary by culture, with Western beauty standards typically emphasizing thinness and youthfulness, while other cultures may prioritize other traits such as fuller figures or pale skin. Furthermore, beauty standards intersect with other social identities, such as race and gender, resulting in complex and often harmful beauty stereotypes. As such, it is crucial to understand the impact of beauty standards, ideologies, and stereotypes on individuals and society as a whole.

Karla A. Mallette, Jennifer A. Fisette, and Carly L. Thomsen (2017) investigates the relationship between body image and beauty standards from an intersectional perspective. The authors argue that prior research on body image has been limited in its focus on only one aspect of identity, such as gender or race, and has failed to consider how different identities intersect to shape an individual's experience with their body and beauty standards.

Ms. Keerty Nakray's (2018) offers a critical examination of the worldwide beauty industry, focusing on the issues of colorism and racism within it. The article argues that Eurocentric beauty standards perpetuated and reinforced by the industry lead to discrimination against individuals with darker skin tones.

Melissa R. Laughter, Jaclyn B. Anderson, Mayra B.C. Maymone and George Kroumpouzou, (2023) discuss an important topic in the realm of beauty standards and its effects on the upcoming, growing youth as well as the role that social media plays in it. The idea of beauty is not fixed and can change depending on cultural practices and societal interactions, including exposure to social media. The use of digital platforms for communication has increased significantly, leading to constant self-evaluation and the discovery of perceived flaws in virtual appearance.

Araceli Gonzalez and Shannon N. Lenze. (2018) discusses the impact of social media on beauty standards and its potential negative effects on body image and self-esteem. The authors provide a comprehensive review of existing literature on the topic and offer implications for counsellors working with clients who struggle with body image concerns. The article also explores how social media can contribute to the perpetuation of

unrealistic beauty standards and provide a platform for comparison and criticism.

Alexandra L. (2015) Buddy examines the influence of media on body image and self-esteem, specifically looking at how media images of thin, idealized bodies can negatively impact individuals' perceptions of their bodies. The author reviews existing literature on the subject and offers insight into how media images can perpetuate unrealistic beauty standards and contribute to the development of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders.

Brianna Gray (2022, May 25) highlights how European cultures devalue the physical features of the black community. It explains how much trauma black people go through for not being perceived as up to the beautified expectations in comparison with European countries. Celebrities like the Kardashians have influenced stereotypical "black features" like darker shades of skin, and curvy bodies more desirable. Since the beginning of time, black women's bodies and beauty have largely been devalued and European aesthetics have been overvalued.

Kerry Health LPC-S, NCC, CEDS-S reviewed by Kristen Fuller MD (January 23, 2023) explains all the body image, they explain the importance of building a positive role for body image. There are so many factors responsible for negative perception of body image such as media highlighting certain body types, shapes, and sizes, and these factors can make an individual feel that they are not appealing enough to be looked at. The writer tells us how important it is for us to develop a healthy perception of ourselves because it will impact the way we feel about ourselves. The article concludes by mentioning that body positivity can only come to us when we accept all parts of ourselves, including the negatives too.

Javier (January 18, 2021) mentions that the presence of social media influences the sense of body image we build. It's mentioned in this article that technological influence will have worsening repercussions. It was also found that the young generation is lacking real connections and are constantly comparing themselves to strangers who post online.

Susannah Woodbury, intern, and Emma Parkhurst, professional practice extension assistant professor (November 30, 2021) mentions it has two types positive and negative body image. Positive body image includes being comfortable in your skin and being confident about the same. It's also to

acknowledge that your body shape has very little to do with your character or values as a person. Negative self-image includes the feeling of shame, distorted self-perception of the self, anxiety, and not being comfortable in your skin.

Jada Jones (April 9, 2021) From this article we analyze that in our world today beauty standards for women are high, almost unattainable to reach. Beauty standards are a part of women's history, and women have always been put under pressure to look a certain way.

Author Meri Tedinac (December 2010) he says that standards of beauty were for a long time considered to be culturally determined, meaning that different people with different life experiences in different cultures acquire different standards of beauty. From the perspective of evolutionary psychology, beauty is not a cultural construct, and appreciating beauty is not learned but is rather a biological adaptation, a part of universal human nature.

David (2011) discusses that beauty and physical attractiveness, which is a serious matter, be considered part of evolutionary theory.

Claudia Borelli, Mirjam Berneburg (April 2010) This article discusses aesthetic issues and their management with patients which is a growing area of dermatologic practice. We review various features leading to the impression of beauty and attractiveness. Familiarity with these concepts should facilitate a broader discussion with the patient on the aspects of beauty and attractiveness beyond the borders of one's discipline and lead to multidisciplinary treatment options. We also examine the question of how much the personality of the beholder himself is involved in the perception of attractiveness and beauty of the person sitting opposite to him.

Susruthi Rajanala, and Neelam A Vashi (Aug 2019) highlights that Studies across various fields have shown that being beautiful can result in emotional well-being and privilege in one's career and personal life. However, beauty is not equally distributed in our society, leading people to pursue aesthetic treatments and procedures to meet the beauty standard. Over time and with the influence of media, the societally accepted beauty standard has evolved.

Julianna Strano (Feb 23, 2022) says that this article we analyze that our world today's beauty standards for women are high, almost unattainable to reach. Beauty standards are a part of women's

history, and women have always been put under pressure to look a certain way.

Daniel Yarosh (April 2019) argues that beauty standards are set by human nature to seek reproductive health in others, but also explains that people tend to "deceive" others by using clothing, makeup, and other methods to seem more attractive. It solely focuses on evolution. It is unclear whether it argues that every beauty standard is set by evolution, or just the ones discussed in the paper, but there are no counterarguments explained in the paper.

Anoushka Benbow- Buitenhuis (2014) the author discusses the way capitalism and beauty products combine to create an increasingly inescapable beauty standard for women. It traces the link between capitalism and beauty in the US to the 1920s, "conceptions of what a 'New Woman' could be assisted by the emergence of a feminized mass consumerism, as beauty products came to symbolize female freedom and Western political emancipation.

Cameron Davis (July 27, 2016) found on the Girls Empowerment Network discusses the impact of social media on women's self-image. Younger women don't receive a lot of education on how "normal" bodies can look, and thus the constant exposure to flawless and edited bodies can be detrimental to self-esteem. There seems to be little diversity in so many aspects of beauty online, which perpetuates harmful expectations on girls, as well as men. The article suggests that "It is important for young girls to seek out these body-positive celebrities so that they understand that beauty is being yourself and accepting yourself."

Crimson, White (May 8, 2023) *Crimson White* suggested that "trends change", but long-term self-love is what lasts. This hit the nail on the head because it's true, the ideal body and the ideal appearance is a trend, even if evolutionary scientists state otherwise. Ranging from racism to capitalism, to media, beauty has become a way for people to lose agency in a social system. Even while beauty products are marketed as individualistic, they aren't and are mainly profitable to those with capital or social power. Beauty is in a weird valley between a fact of science and a social construct, which is why abolishing the concept is extremely difficult, or even impossible.

Research gap:

As we know beauty influences most sections of society today. Particularly, the urge to look a

certain way in teenage to early adulthood is real. The young phase of an individual is mostly occupied with being conscious about their appearance, but this could lead to devastating psychological disorders and mental health concerns. There is enough research on beautification based on geographical area and differences in cultures among continents. But this research mainly digs into college-going students and their personal experience in dealing with beauty stereotypes. It provides a glimpse into how much the young generation is affected by beautification through the lens of their perspectives.

Significance of research:

Beauty standards continue to influence our day-to-day life. It constructs the elements of how we are perceived in society. There have been many articles elucidating the subjective criteria for collective beauty standards based on geographical area. But this article interacts with college-going students on how they have personally felt the presence of beauty stereotypes and what changes they aspire to bring into society. This study aimed to investigate the prevalence and predictors of the impact of beauty standards and ideologies on society, with a focus on the young adult population aged 18-25. The researchers used data from a large-scale population-based study and analyzed various related variables.

Methodology:

The survey method, including the questionnaire in the form of Google form, was distributed among college-going students. There were 14 questions, 10 of which were closed-ended so that the respondents could easily respond. 4 other questions demanded explanatory answers, asking for age, gender, how the presence of beauty standards affected them on a personal level, and what changes they aspire to bring to eradicate beauty standards. Maximum responses were from the age category of 18-22 (73.6%).

The data used in this research paper was collected through an online medium, making it accessible for people to respond. The data was collected through google forms, so the analysis of the data was already available and accessible to us. The research was conducted on smaller area criteria for effective results. The entire study aims to measure how affected individuals are due to beauty stereotypes and what changes they wish to bring into society. The responses were later analyzed and vividly explained.

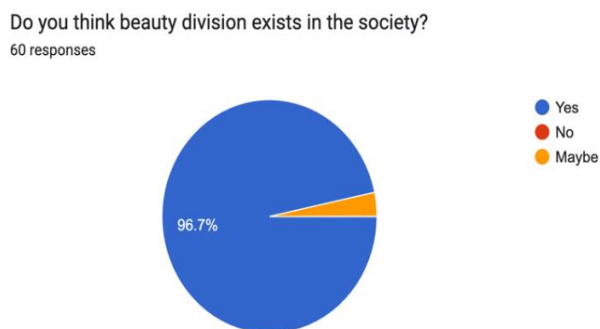
Findings, results, and discussion:**FIGURE 1**

Figure 1 portrays that most people think that beauty divisions exist within society. There are differences in an individual is treated based on their appearance. There are only 3.3% of people who maybe think that beauty divisions may exist within

society. Everyone in society feels that differentiation is practiced based on beautification. Majority of the people agree that divisions are created based on beautification and individuals are treated on the basis of those division created.

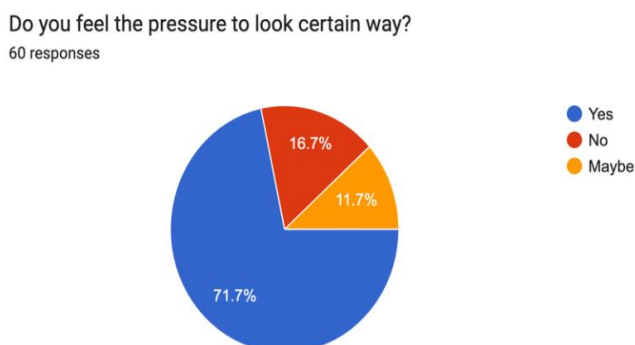
FIGURE 2

Figure 2 tells us that a total of 71.7% of individuals feel the pressure to look a certain way, and present themselves certain. They feel pressurized that they cannot dress according to their comfort but instead according to how they will be perceived by others. This percentage tells us that people somehow are

insecure, uncomfortable with their appearance, and care too much about what the other person will think. An individual who feels secure within themselves would not let the pressure to look a certain way overpower them.

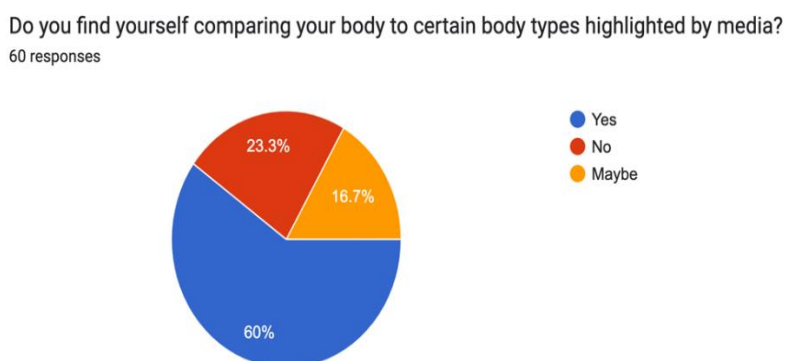
FIGURE 3

Figure 3 tells us clearly how much social media glorifies certain body types, tones, and weights and how much people are affected by such presence. Almost 60% of individuals find themselves comparing their body-to-body types highlighted by media. Being influenced by social media can lead to devastating effects on the mental health of an individual. An individual starts comparing

themselves when they feel discontentment with themselves while feeling that way already comparing can result in feeling emotion like sadness, low self-esteem, constant self-hate, and much more.

FIGURE 4

Have you ever been bothered by how much you often criticize your appearance?
60 responses

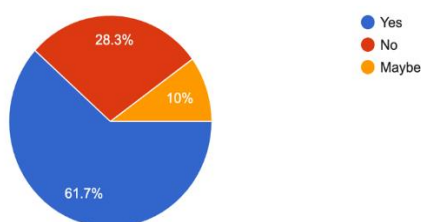


Figure 4 shows us that almost 62% of the people feel bothered by how much they often criticize their appearance. It reflects that people who voted for the option 'yes' has some level of negative perception of themselves and whenever it shows up, they are bothered by how much they undervalue themselves. They tend to develop lower self-esteem and confidence. Some of the respondents also responded with how the presence of beauty stereotypes has affected them on a personal basis:

- *Anonymous respondent 1:* When I was young, I thought beauty was only about having a pretty face but when I grew up, I came to know how much people zoom in on your looks and body and objectify everything. This has led to so many insecurities, but I always try to accept that my face or my body is not the definition of who I'm. I can be more than pretty looks, I can fulfill my dream and live my life with aspirations and prudent nature and that's what makes me a human.
- *Anonymous respondent 2:* I have unhealthy eating habits and a distorted perception of my physical self It has certainly affected my confidence level and the perceived perception of being judged. I make changes in my attire to hide my insecurities.
- *Anonymous respondent 3:* On my personal level beauty stereotypes affected me a lot I never used to care about my outfit before but now if it

isn't decent, I don't even feel like going out, and like it started a competition in my mind that no matter what I must look the coolest that's wrong but eh welcome to gen-z.

- *Anonymous respondent 4:* Conformed to look and present oneself in a certain way with 'ideal' weight, height, complexion, facial feature, and body hair that biologically, physiologically, and psychologically hampers one's health. Social media has been both detrimental and aware agency in this.
- *Anonymous respondent 5:* since a young age, society shows you how you're supposed to look and that you have to conform to fit in if you don't enter their beauty standards, which I never did, it can be hard to appreciate your body so you end up growing up hating a body that you should love because it allows you to live
- *Anonymous respondent 6:* It has been a cause of severe depression to see the deteriorating quality of my hair, health, and stamina, over time and especially after COVID.
- *Anonymous respondent 7:* When I first heard and saw all these beauty standards, I was overwhelmed and felt like I always had to look and act a certain way. I was very insecure about my body weight and how I was not of a certain weight accepted by people around me. But as time goes by, I started receiving appraisals about my studies and my achievements. My parents also helped me to overcome my

insecurity about my weight and appearance. Now I believe there is nothing more beautiful than being kind and generous. I always try to maintain a healthy body without worrying about my weight.

- *Anonymous respondent 8*: At times doubt myself to an extent where I have felt so much like abandoning who I am, my individuality, trying to adopt ways to become more acceptable according to the self-made standards of beauty set by few top-notch companies and industries.

The data was distributed among college-going students out of which 60 people responded to the questionnaire. Out of 60 responses, the participation of the male category was 43.3%, and the rest 56.7% were occupied by females. Most of the responses were from people belonging to the age group of 18 - 23. Based on the data collected we can conclude most people think that beauty divisions exist in society, and they create differences among people. Most people felt the pressure to look a certain way, and dress according to what will be perceived as "cool" and "aesthetically pleasing". People often found themselves comparing their body types to the body types which were glorified by the media.

According to the results, 48.3% of people found themselves being concerned about others' opinions of their appearance. They were self-conscious about how they were perceived by others. Looking at the media influences today it's difficult to survive in a world that does not promote the usage of beauty filters and surgeries. Through this study, even on a smaller scale people are considering undergoing surgeries/beauty treatment due to discontentment they feel in their appearance.

Looking at social media every day, somehow people unconsciously and consciously compare themselves to others not realizing that their true authentic self is of utmost beauty and hence requires health care. We as the elements of society too need to realize our roles in the promotion of unhealthy beauty stereotypes. According to the survey taken out, most people fail to feel beautiful in their authentic selves. This reflects that people are dealing with physical insecurities every day and letting those insecurities overpower them. This behavior can often lead to the development of psychological disorders such as body dysmorphia. It's sad knowing that humans who were meant to love one another despite any differences, find themselves in a loop of self-hatred and insecurities. We as a community should encourage our peers to

be vulnerable about their insecurities, and self-doubts so that we can deal with everyone with more kindness and gentleness. On asking people what they desired to change within society, a few responses are worth giving a read:

- *Anonymous respondent 1*: People should change their mindsets and come to terms with the fact that there is nothing more stylish than being your wonderful individual self. No one can beat that. Be known for who you are and what you stand for and don't let others overshadow your uniqueness.
- *Anonymous respondent 2*: Normalize every skin tone. Spreading that beauty matters more on the inside than on the outside Acceptance of different body types, different skin types, and the notion of focusing more on the inner self rather than on the outer beauty.
- *Anonymous respondent 3*: By normalizing natural beauty, encouraging people to accept their appearances and promote natural beauty. It's a harsh reality that people judge by the appearance of the person, but along with promoting natural beauty, one should seek the character of the individual rather than how they appear.
- *Anonymous respondent 4*: Changes and improvement in educational boards and curriculum, addressing the issue on bigger social platforms, debunking social media trends that enable negative perceptions of beauty.
- *Anonymous respondent 5*: Beauty standards are diverse and vary from country to country. No matter how hard someone tries they can never fit in all the beauty standards set by society or social media. If one focuses on outside beauty only then one might lose or affect what's inside them, so I try my best to accept myself in my natural self and do not worry about criticism that is mostly made by pathetic or self-centered people.
- *Anonymous respondent 6*: I don't want other people to go through the mindset of "I don't look good enough" just because they can't fit in today's notion of 'beauty.'

Based on responses shared by people it's very clear that evolution in beautification is necessary for people's mental wellness. let's dig more into how beauty stereotypes can develop psychological disorders in individuals:

Analysis

Beauty Standards and Body Image

Beauty standards and ideologies have been deeply ingrained in our culture for centuries. The pressure to conform to these standards has led many people to resort to toxic beautification techniques such as skin whitening, body-shaping corsets, and plastic surgery. These techniques not only pose a physical threat but can also lead to psychological disorders such as body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) and eating disorders.

Body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) is a psychological disorder that causes a person to have a distorted perception of their appearance. People with BDD are obsessed with perceived flaws in their appearance, often spending hours a day checking or grooming themselves and seeking cosmetic procedures to fix their perceived defects. BDD can be triggered by societal pressures to conform to beauty standards or by trauma related to physical appearance.

Eating disorders are another psychological disorder that can be triggered by societal pressure to conform to beauty standards. Anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa are two common eating disorders that affect people of all genders and ages. These disorders are characterized by an unhealthy obsession with weight and body shape, leading to restrictive eating habits, binge eating, and purging behaviors. Eating disorders can have severe physical and mental health consequences, including heart failure, depression, and anxiety.

Toxic beautification techniques and stereotypes also impact mental health in less obvious ways. For example, studies have shown that negative stereotypes about aging can lead to lower self-esteem and poor mental health among older adults. The pressure to look youthful and beautiful at any age can lead to anxiety, depression, and social isolation.

In conclusion, toxic beautification techniques and stereotypes can have severe psychological consequences. BDD, eating disorders, and other mental health disorders are just some of the many ways that people can be impacted by societal pressure to conform to beauty standards. It is essential to raise awareness about the negative impacts of beauty standards and to promote self-acceptance and body positivity. By promoting a culture that values diversity and individuality, we can help reduce the prevalence of toxic beautification techniques and stereotypes and support people in achieving their best mental and physical health.

Beauty Standards and Mental Health: The Impact of Societal Expectations on Bulimia Nervosa

Beauty standards are pervasive in our society, with images of idealized beauty presented to us daily in magazines, social media, and advertising. While these beauty standards can inspire us to take care of our appearance, they can also harm our mental health, particularly for those with eating disorders like bulimia nervosa. In this paper, we will explore how beauty standards impact a person's mental health, specifically in the context of bulimia nervosa, and discuss strategies for promoting a healthier relationship with beauty ideals.

Bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder characterized by a cycle of binge eating followed by purging behaviors, such as self-induced vomiting or laxative abuse. Individuals with bulimia nervosa may have a distorted body image and feel a strong pressure to conform to societal beauty standards, which can contribute to their disordered eating behaviors. The prevalence of bulimia nervosa is estimated to be 1-2% among women and 0.1% among men in the general population, with higher rates among certain groups such as athletes, dancers, and models.

Beauty standards can have a profound impact on a person's mental health, particularly for those with bulimia nervosa. Societal beauty standards often promote a narrow and unrealistic ideal of beauty, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem for individuals who do not conform to these ideals. This can be especially problematic for individuals with bulimia nervosa, who may already struggle with a distorted body image and a sense of shame or guilt surrounding their eating behaviors. Moreover, the pressure to conform to beauty standards can exacerbate the disordered eating behaviors of individuals with bulimia nervosa. Studies have found that exposure to images of thin models and celebrities can increase the likelihood of disordered eating behaviors among women, including binge eating and purging behaviors. Additionally, social media platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok, can contribute to the problem by promoting unattainable beauty ideals and creating a culture of comparison and competition.

The Impact of Beauty Standards on Body Dysmorphia

Body dysmorphia is a mental health disorder characterized by an obsessive preoccupation with perceived flaws or defects in one's appearance. While the causes of body dysmorphia are complex and multifactorial, there is growing evidence to

suggest that beauty standards play a significant role in the development of the disorder. In this paper, we will explore how beauty standards contribute to the development of body dysmorphia and discuss strategies for promoting greater awareness and understanding of this issue.

The Pressure to Conform to Beauty Standards

Beauty standards are a set of cultural norms that define what is considered attractive or desirable in terms of physical appearance. These standards are constantly evolving and can vary widely depending on factors such as age, gender, race, and socioeconomic status. While there is no one-size-fits-all definition of beauty, many individuals feel pressured to conform to these standards to be accepted or admired by others. The pressure to conform to beauty standards can have a significant impact on an individual's self-esteem and body image. To meet these standards, many individuals engage in behaviors such as dieting, excessive exercise, or cosmetic surgery. While these behaviors may initially provide a sense of control or accomplishment, they can ultimately contribute to the development of body dysmorphia.

The Link Between Beauty Standards and Body Dysmorphia

Research has found that individuals who are more preoccupied with their appearance and who experience greater pressure to conform to beauty standards are more likely to develop body dysmorphia. This is because the constant scrutiny of one's appearance can lead to a distorted perception of one's body, with even minor imperfections or differences being magnified and perceived as major flaws. Additionally, the constant exposure to unrealistic beauty standards through media and advertising can also contribute to the development of body dysmorphia. Images of idealized and airbrushed bodies can create unrealistic expectations and lead to feelings of inadequacy or self-doubt.

The Impact of social media on Body Dysmorphia

Social media has become a powerful tool for shaping beauty standards and influencing body image. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok are often flooded with images of perfect bodies, flawless skin, and immaculate hair, creating a constant stream of unrealistic and unattainable beauty standards. Research has found that social media use is associated with increased body dissatisfaction and a greater likelihood of developing body dysmorphia. This is because social media creates a culture of comparison,

where individuals are constantly comparing their appearance to that of others and feeling inadequate as a result.

Prevention and Coping Strategies for Body Dysmorphia

While the impact of beauty standards on body dysmorphia can be significant, there are a few prevention and coping strategies that individuals can use to manage their symptoms. These may include developing a positive body image, seeking professional help when needed, and challenging unrealistic beauty standards. Developing a positive body image involves learning to appreciate one's body for its strengths and abilities, rather than focusing on perceived flaws or imperfections. This can involve practicing self-compassion, avoiding negative self-talk, and engaging in activities that promote physical and mental well-being. Seeking professional help can also be an effective strategy for managing body dysmorphia. This may involve working with a mental health professional to develop a personalized treatment plan, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy or medication. Finally, challenging unrealistic beauty standards is an important step in promoting greater awareness and understanding of body dysmorphia. This may involve advocating for more diverse and inclusive representations of beauty in media and advertising or supporting organizations and initiatives that promote body positivity and self-acceptance.

Anxiety and Depression

Beauty standards are a set of societal norms that define what is considered attractive or desirable in terms of physical appearance. While these standards are constantly changing and can vary based on factors such as age, gender, and culture, they can have a significant impact on an individual's mental health. In this paper, we will explore how beauty standards contribute to anxiety and depression and discuss strategies for promoting greater awareness and understanding of these issues.

The pressure to conform to beauty standards is a common experience for many individuals. These standards are reinforced through various forms of media, including advertising, movies, and social media platforms, which often promote idealized and unrealistic beauty standards. This pressure to conform can lead to feelings of self-doubt, low self-esteem, and anxiety about one's appearance. Research has found that individuals who experience greater pressure to conform to beauty standards are more likely to develop anxiety and depression. This is because the constant focus on appearance can lead to negative thoughts and

feelings about oneself, creating a cycle of self-criticism and self-doubt.

The link between beauty standards and anxiety and depression is well-documented. Research has found that individuals who experience greater pressure to conform to beauty standards are more likely to experience symptoms of anxiety and depression. This is because the constant scrutiny of one's appearance can lead to a distorted perception of one's body and create a sense of inadequacy or self-doubt.

Additionally, the comparison of one's appearance to the idealized and unrealistic standards portrayed in media and advertising can also contribute to anxiety and depression. These comparisons can create a sense of failure or inadequacy, leading to feelings of hopelessness and despair.

Social media has become a powerful force in shaping beauty standards and influencing body image. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are often flooded with images of perfect bodies, flawless skin, and immaculate hair, creating a constant stream of unrealistic and unattainable beauty standards. Research has found that social media use is associated with increased anxiety and depression, particularly in adolescents and young adults. This is because social media creates a culture of comparison, where individuals are constantly comparing their appearance to that of others and feeling inadequate as a result.

While the impact of beauty standards on anxiety and depression can be significant, there are several prevention and coping strategies that individuals can use to manage their symptoms. These may include developing a positive body image, seeking professional help when needed, and challenging unrealistic beauty standards.

Disability and Beauty: Exploring the Intersection of Two Identities

Beauty standards have long been a topic of fascination and critique in popular culture and academia alike. However, discussions of beauty often overlook the experiences of individuals with disabilities, whose bodies and identities are often excluded from mainstream beauty norms. In this paper, we explore the intersection of disability and beauty, examining how disability is represented and experienced within beauty standards and exploring strategies for promoting inclusive and diverse beauty ideals.

Representation of Disability in Beauty Standards:

Historically, beauty standards have been shaped by a narrow set of physical characteristics that privilege able-bodied people and exclude individuals

with disabilities. From fashion advertisements featuring able-bodied models to beauty pageants that prioritize conventional beauty standards, the exclusion of individuals with disabilities is pervasive in the beauty industry. This exclusion is reinforced by cultural stereotypes that equate disability with ugliness or imperfection, perpetuating harmful attitudes toward people with disabilities.

However, there are examples of progress in the representation of disability in beauty standards. In recent years, the fashion industry has made efforts to include individuals with disabilities in its advertising campaigns and runway shows. Models with disabilities, such as Madeline Stuart and Jillian Mercado, have gained visibility and recognition for their work in challenging conventional beauty norms. These efforts have been praised for their inclusive message and for promoting a more diverse and representative vision of beauty.

Despite these advances, individuals with disabilities still face significant barriers when it comes to beauty standards. Many people with disabilities report feeling excluded or marginalized by mainstream beauty ideals and may experience feelings of shame or self-consciousness about their bodies. They may also face practical barriers to accessing beauty products and services, such as difficulty finding makeup that matches their skin tone or hair products that work with their specific hair texture.

In addition to these challenges, people with disabilities may also face discrimination in the beauty industry. For example, a person with a visible disability may be denied entry to a beauty pageant or modeling competition or may be told that they do not fit the physical requirements for a particular job. These experiences can be damaging to a person's self-esteem and sense of belonging and can perpetuate harmful stereotypes about disability.

Despite the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities, there are many ways in which the beauty industry can work to promote more inclusive and diverse beauty ideals. One key strategy is to feature more models and influencers with disabilities in advertising and media campaigns. By showcasing a wider range of body types, skin tones, and abilities, the beauty industry can help to promote a more inclusive and representative vision of beauty that celebrates diversity.

Another strategy is to create beauty products and services that are accessible to people with disabilities. This could include creating makeup brushes that are easier to grip for people with

mobility impairments, or developing hair products that work well for a range of hair textures and styles. By making these small but important changes, the beauty industry can help to ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunities to express themselves and feel confident in their appearance as able-bodied individuals.

In conclusion, the intersection of disability and beauty is an important and often overlooked area of study. By examining the representation of disability in beauty standards, the experiences of individuals with disabilities, and strategies for promoting inclusive and diverse beauty ideals, we can begin to challenge harmful stereotypes and promote a more equitable and representative vision of beauty. Ultimately, by working to include individuals with disabilities in beauty norms, we can help to create a more just and inclusive society for all.

Toxic beauty standards and their impact on mental health are significant issues that need to be addressed at both the individual and societal levels.

Discussion and suggestions

Here are some solutions that can help tackle this problem:

- **Promote Self-Acceptance and Body Positivity:** Society needs to embrace diversity and promote self-acceptance and body positivity. We should celebrate all body types, skin tones, and features, rather than promoting a narrow definition of beauty. Individuals should be encouraged to accept their bodies and appreciate their unique qualities.
- **Raise Awareness About the Negative Impacts of Beauty Standards:** Society needs to be educated about the negative impacts of toxic beauty standards. Public campaigns, social media, and other forms of media can be used to raise awareness about the negative effects of beauty standards on mental health.
- **Encourage Mental Health Screening:** Mental health screening can help identify individuals who are at risk of developing psychological disorders due to toxic beauty standards. Healthcare professionals can offer screening for BDD and eating disorders to individuals who are seeking cosmetic procedures.
- **Regulate the Beauty Industry:** Governments can regulate the beauty industry to ensure that products and procedures are safe and do not pose a risk to mental or physical health. Regulations can include mandatory warning labels, age limits, and requirements for informed consent.

- **Promote Positive Aging:** Society needs to promote positive aging and challenge negative stereotypes about aging. Older adults should be celebrated for their wisdom and experience, rather than being stigmatized for their appearance.
- **Promote Mental Health Support:** Individuals who are struggling with body image issues and mental health disorders need access to mental health support. Healthcare professionals, support groups, and online resources can provide support and treatment for individuals struggling with the impact of toxic beauty standards on their mental health.

In summary of the above, toxic beauty standards and their impact on mental health are significant issues that need to be addressed at both the individual and societal levels. By promoting self-acceptance and body positivity, raising awareness about the negative impacts of beauty standards, encouraging mental health screening, regulating the beauty industry, promoting positive aging, and promoting mental health support, we can help individuals overcome the impact of toxic beauty standards on their mental health. As a society, we need to embrace diversity and promote a culture that values individuality and self-acceptance.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, beauty standards are a very complex social process that is perpetuated through many forms of social status. While scientists may hold the stance that evolution has caused beauty standards, many other aspects of society have impacted the ideal appearance. We used different articles written by different authors to examine the impact of beauty standards ideologies and stereotypes on youth. Group members identified the impact of beauty standards and stereotypes by using different methodologies for instance we have prepared a questionnaire to know the reviews or thinking prospects of people on beauty standards ideologies and stereotypes and by reviewing different previous articles on beauty standards ideologies and stereotypes. Society has been fixated on beauty from the beginning of time. Beauty standards have always been pervasive, and they continue to have a significant impact on social interaction, the media, and the business sector today. They decide what constitutes "Beauty". Our modern conceptions of beauty have been influenced by a wide range of factors. Our results show a significant and surprising effect of beauty standards on contemporary youth. In our research related to beauty standards ideologies and stereotypes both males and females participate. In

this way, we come to know about the impact of beauty standards on both genders [Male and Female]. From the responses, we come to know that 43.3% of females participated and 56.7% of males participated in our research. From the age group of 16 years to 49 years people participated to give reviews about beauty standards ideologies and stereotypes set by society. 96.7% of citizens believe that beauty division exists in society. our results show that most people in the nation believe that the beauty division exists in society. people were judged and treated according to the tone of their skin color and the rate of their beauty. In society, people with fair skin tones gain more respect and value than people or persons with darker skin tones. That is why people feel pressurized to look in a certain way .71.7% of people feel pressurized to look in a certain way. For instance, girls wear high heels to look tall because society considers tall height people more attractive and considers tall person elegant personalities. Same as boys going to the gym to look more muscular, they hold heavy weights to improve their muscles because being a man they feel pressurized to look, muscular man. Due to the society pressure and different beauty standards set by the society 60% of people find comparing their body to certain body types highlighted by media. On different social media like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat as well as YouTube there are different channels and pages related to health and beauty tips people follow those channels and the pages contain health and beauty tips. There are different beauty standards ideologies and stereotypes set by society. Nowadays people easily get affected by other opinions on their appearance because in the contemporary time people are more conscious regarding their health as well as their beauty. out of the total percentage of people 48.3% of people are concerned about other's opinions on their appearance that is why people set their beauty standards according to the other opinion that is why the presence of beauty surgeries and filters affect their self-confidence. 41.7% of people get affected by the presence of beauty surgeries and filters. people click photographs through different filters to look in a certain way so that they are accepted by society's beauty norms and standards. Nowadays photography through different filters plays a vital role in media, nowadays people get easily influenced by different beauty filters to look more attractive and to enhance their beauty. Nowadays people use different antiaging creams to look young and beautiful /handsome forever the rate of beauty surgeries increasing day by day. Nowadays people undergo beauty treatment as we have mentioned above the rate of surgeries, and

usage of antiaging creams skyrocketed 35% of people consider themselves undergoing beauty treatments due to the influence of beauty standards present in society. On the other hand, 46.7% of people feel beautiful in their authentic selves. These people didn't feel pressurized by society's beauty standards ideologies and stereotypes to look in a certain way. As we know it is commonly said by society, "The first impression is the last". That is why appearance plays an important role in looking attractive or a person with a smart personality. Nowadays people were judged first by noticing their appearance. Appearance becomes the primary thing and profession /qualities in person become the secondary thing. That is the reason 28.3% of people believe that they spend more money on their appearance. Because they get influenced by the dressing trends as well as fashion styles set by society's beauty standards. This work justifies the extreme measures and experiments taken by the people to match the beauty standards set by society. This paper illustrates the possibility of subtle stereotypes having major economic impacts. Further work- including theory, policy, and experiments could fruitfully shed light on this important issue.

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